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MESS'RS EDITORS,

OBSERVING my first letter of address to the good people of Connecticut was published, on the subject of contributing for the support of Missions, I now send you a second, requesting the same favor.

MINORIS.

Friends and Fellow Christians,

IN my last, I gave you a general view of the wide field, that is opened for Missionary labors in this country; and of the peculiar obligations on the American Church to contribute for so benevolent a purpose. I shall now particularly state some further reasons and motives to excite your liberality.

I. I beg you to consider the worth of the souls of men. Endeavor to conceive the worth of your own souls; the worth of a heaven that is eternal, and the awfulness of sinking into utter and eternal woe; and then consider that all the Heathen, and all our friends in the new settlements, who are placed beyond the reach of means which God is commonly pleased to bestow unto salvation, have souls as valuable as your own. Heaven will be as precious, and the loss

of its glory as great and irreparable an evil to them, as to yourselves. Who can conceive of the quantity of happiness or misery, that must be experienced by an immortal soul through eternity! It is a quantity that exceeds all the descriptive power of words, and outstretches the strength of created imagination. This will be obtained or lost by each one of those immortal souls, for whom your charity is solicited, and the greater part of them know it not. The way, which is appointed by the gracious Redeemer of men, for them to obtain this knowledge, is through your instrumental liberality; and can you deny it? Can you say, I will forbear to give, and thus place at risque their souls, this immense quantity of bliss and woe? The security and ignorance and unconcern of these people for themselves, in many instances, is the very reason why your Christian compassion ought to yearn over them. The salvation of one soul would far outweigh all the pains than can be taken, for it is a value of infinite amount, in the case of a single person; and how much greater in the multitude of

cases, that address your benevolence ?

2. It is thro' the means of knowledge, that the sovereign grace of God brings sinners to eternal life. All the energies of infinite power, both in the kingdoms of nature and grace, work with means. For any to deny this is the height of madness, and shows them to be ignorant of the grand principles of divine wisdom and acting. By means men receive their daily bread and cloathing ; by means they receive knowledge in things natural and divine, and without knowledge in divine and sacred subjects there is no reason to think they will be saved. The appointed means for communicating knowledge, is thro' the instrumentality of those who have themselves received it. The command, "go teach all nations" was through the Apostles made to the church, and to those who are christianized, and have a fulness of the means of information. You have no right to think, that if God intends salvation to others he will find the instruments and defray the expense without you. You are the instruments, either by your personal labor or by your contribution, to do this work. Shrink not back from the expense, for to an individual or family it is small ; it is the price of your own duty ; and God hath already repaid it to you. You are his stewards, and the fund which is to do this work is already in your hands, and will you refuse to pay it over again to the calls of his word, his providence and your own duty ?

3. Consider the guilt of transgressing the divine command "go teach all nations." Think no longer, that this precept was given to a few individuals only ; for it is to all christianized people, and as uni-

versal in its extension as the laws of morality. Perhaps one reason, that the Lord hath so long and so often shown himself displeased with the Christian Church, hath been their neglect of duty in this respect. Perhaps, the reason he hath denied a blessing on means where they are enjoyed, is the general neglect to spread such means to those who are destitute of them. The writer believes, that in the divine sight, this hath been a very provoking sin of those who enjoy means and have neglected to communicate them ; and it is certainly an excellent method of stirring up ourselves to our own soul's concerns, to be solicitous and diligent in giving to others the knowledge of eternal life. If all christianized people were awake to this duty, we have reason to hope there would be great refreshings from on high, on those who give as well as on those who receive.

4. Such are the duties of men, that all the trouble and expense attending, are richly repaid in the peace of conscience, and in the pleasure that is found in performing them. With what pain, must the illiberal think of their own parsimony, in not giving to so divine a purpose ! The pleasure of looking on the property, which they have denied to the Lord and the service of his kingdom, must be changed for pain of conscience, whenever they consider the subject. On the other hand how great the pleasure of contemplating on past liberality thus applied ! It is the pleasure of communing with the blessed Saviour in his love of the souls of men. It is the honor of being workers together with him, in the glorious scheme of salvation.—It is the satisfaction of thinking, I have made some little endeavor towards my duty, and the

confined at home by my necessary employments and unqualified for a public instructor and messenger of peace ; yet I am by my charity travelling the wilderness, comforting the lonely children of God with the promises of his grace ; and persuading sinners to consider, repent and believe. Such reflections as these are full of peace, and who that hath tasted would not wish to purchase them in fuller degree !

5. It is a divine promise " cast thy bread upon the waters, for after many days thou shalt find it."—Thesewords are used as a motive to be liberal in every kind of charity, to the bodies and souls of men. Divine goodness hath connected a reward with doing our duty. The good we do to others, shall be repaid into our own bosoms, either here or hereafter ; perhaps doubly repaid in both worlds. He that giveth even a cup of cold water, in the name or with the spirit of a disciple, shall not lose his reward. He shall be remembered, in the kingdom of heaven, for all the good he hath done to Christ's kingdom here on earth. Is there not also a promise of being rewarded here on earth ? " The liberal deviseth liberal things ; and by liberal things shall he stand." As the Redeemer's providence directs the innumerable events, on which men's prosperity depends, there is every reason to believe he repays the debt of charities imparted to his kingdom. Reader, art thou afraid to give, lest thou shouldest be poorer here ? If this hath been thy fear, review the subject, consider the divine command, reflect in whose hands, and under whose providence all thy properties and labors are, and be afraid to deny, lest thou be blasted in thy counsels

of gain by an unseen hand, which worketh without contradiction.

Christians, if you are such indeed, with you I need not have recourse to this argument. With you the value of a few shillings annually, or even pounds, if you have affluence, will appear like a despicable consideration, in comparison with the pleasures of a benevolent heart in evangelizing men ; and infinitely small compared with the worth of a single soul.—Let all consider, whether, if they do not feel this subject, they are not very sinful in the sight of God, and unprepared for his glorious kingdom.

By application to the gentlemen who direct the concerns of the Missionary Society of Connecticut, I have obtained the following information. That since the institution of the Society in June 1798, to the present time, March 31, 1801, there have been 405 weeks of Missionary services performed, at the expense of the Society.—By the journals of the Missionaries, it appears that they have preached almost every day, and often twice and three times in a day ; so that on a moderate computation they have preached 2835 times ; besides attending conferences and more private meetings many hundred times ; catechising children ; administering the Christian ordinances ; and performing other ministerial services, in visiting the sick, organizing churches, funerals, &c.* In ad-

* The services mentioned above were performed by the following gentlemen. Rev. Messrs. Aaron Kinne, David Huntington, Alexander Gillet, William Storrs, Walter King, Publius V. Bogue, Amos Basset, Marshfield Steele, Salmon King, Sylvester Dana, Josiah B. Andrews ; together with the following gentlemen, who are now out, Rev. Messrs. Seth Williston, Jediah Bushnell, Amasa Jerome, and Robert Porter.

dition to these services, the Rev. Joseph Badger hath been four months in Connecticut Reserve, so called. And Mr Bacon hath been, since June last, in the service of the Society, attempting to open an intercourse in the things of religion, with the Indians Northwest of Lake Erie. A great blessing hath, in many parts, attended the labor of the Missionaries; and there are importunate applications from the New-Settlements, in almost every direction, for instructors in religion. I am also informed, that there is, at the present moment, a field opened to employ double the number of Missionaries that have ever been out before; and that if the funds can be provided, it is probable, that men of respectable character and piety can be obtained to do the service.

The rapid settlement of the Connecticut Reserve, merits the attention of the serious. It is a great plantation filling up with your own children, and can you deny your liberality to them?—May all be warmed with a love of Christ and of souls, and unite in prayer that the hearts of the people may be opened to impart; and that faithful laborers may be prepared and sent forth to the harvest.

MINORIS.

An enquiry concerning the imputation of iniquity and holiness, contrary to personal character: grounded on 2 Cor. v. 21. For he hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

THE persons spoken of, it is evident, are God the Father, Jesus the Mediator, and sinners of the human race. "We are ambassa-

dors for Christ," the apostle had said, "as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." To enforce which urgent exhortation, the verse to be considered is immediately subjoined: *For he hath made him to be sin for us, &c.*

In attempting to investigate this difficult subject, guided by these words, I shall enquire, and endeavour to explain, how God hath made Christ to be sin—How this was just—How we, when united to Christ, are made the righteousness of God in him: And, what necessity there was for this wonderful commutation, that sinners might be pardoned and have eternal life.

The first question is, How hath God made his holy son Jesus to be sin for us?

I take the apostle's meaning to be, that he hath made him a sacrifice for our sins. It has been observed by expositors, that in the Septuagint, (a Greek translation of the Old-Testament, used by the writers of the new, in their quotations and allusions,) the word here rendered *sin*, commonly signifies a *sin-offering*. That is, an animal offered in sacrifice, to obtain forgiveness of some transgression of the Jewish ceremonial law. On one such occasion, it was ordained, Levit. iv. 32, that the offender should bring a lamb without blemish, and slay it for a sin offering; having laid his hand upon its head.

Now, in this case, it is certain the crime of the person was not so transferred to the harmless victim, as to render that an actual criminal. The lamb, after all, was really as innocent as ever; and in the nature of things could not be otherwise. But by the man's laying his hand upon the

head of it, according to divine appointment, it was substituted in his place; and consequently, was put to death, as he deserved to have been, the guiltless for the guilty.

In like manner, we are not to suppose that our Saviour, the lamb slain from the foundation of the world, was made a real sinner, by his substitution as a sufferer in our stead. When the Lord had laid on him the iniquity of us all, he did not thenceforward view him as a real object of his righteous displeasure. Still the holy Governor of the world said of him, "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Was God the Father perfectly well pleased with him, *personally* considered; but really very angry with him, considered as the *surety* of sinners!

All that we are to understand by our Saviour's being made sin for us, I conceive, is this. By the appointment and providence of God, that suffering which we deserved, and must otherwise have endured, was so far laid upon him, as would answer every necessary purpose of our just punishment.

Accordingly, he was treated as if he had been a sinner, and as no other innocent person was ever treated. As if he had been a sinner, he was born of a woman, and born in very singular circumstances of distress and wretchedness. As if he had been a sinner, he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, all his days. As if he had been a sinner, he was subjected to hard labor, probably in the early part of life, and certainly during his public ministry. He was "in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often;" and often he had no place

of secure repose, where to lay his head. As if he had been a sinner, he was perpetually reviled and calumniated, and had all manner of evil said against him, even by men in high reputation for sanctity and virtue. As if he had been a sinner, he was at last apprehended by the officers of justice, and put to a very painful and most ignominious death—the death of the cross. And he was crucified between two thieves, as the greatest malefactor of the three.

Thus was our Saviour treated, though perfectly free from sin. And to all this he was delivered, as the apostle Peter tells us, "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." So likewise we are informed by the ancient prophecies concerning him. In them it was written, "Awake, O sword," against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. He hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth: Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief."

Secondly I proceed to enquire, how this was just. What righteousness was there in it, that one who knew no sin, should thus suffer as a sinner?

"He was made sin *for us*," the text says; and so says the prophet Isaiah: "He was wounded for *our* transgressions, he was bruised for *our* iniquities."

But this, instead of relieving, seems only to increase the difficulty. To slay the righteous *with* the wicked, Abraham concluded must be far from the Judge of all the earth; because he thought it could not be right: but how much more, should we suppose it must be far from him, and far from being right, to slay the righteous *for* the wicked! God hath said, and

solemnly declared it is an essential part of his glory, that he "will by *no means* clear the guilty." Will he thus, as the means of doing this, *condemn the innocent*; He hath said, "Are not my ways equal?—The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." In this manner hath the most High condescended to clear himself of the imputation of unrighteousness. He does this by denying the fact alleged, and not by justifying it; which implies a plain confession, that did he punish one person, for the sins of another, the complaint that his ways were not equal, would be well grounded.

To remove this objection, as it respects the death of our Saviour, an approved expositor, in a note on the text now under consideration, says; "Unless the guilt of our iniquities, or our law-obligation to punishment, had been judicially charged upon Christ, it seems to me that he could not, by any rule of justice, have borne their punishment. For, in the order of justice, our sins must first be supposed to be placed to his account, to answer for them, before he could undergo the proper punishment for them; since divine justice can no more punish the entirely, and in all respects, guiltless, than clear the guilty."

You see, it is here supposed, that our sins were imputed, by the supreme Judge, to the holy Jesus, so as to become really his; till which he could not, and after which he could, and did, justly bear the proper punishment for them. And this is the way of getting over the difficulty, which

has generally been adopted by our best divines. It is a mode of reasoning so long established, and sanctioned by so many venerable authorities, that I once supposed it must be scriptural, and agreeable to common sense; and therefore labored to comprehend its consistency. But, after searching diligently, to me, it could never appear satisfactory. I can no more see the justice of *imputing* sin, to one *personally* innocent, so that he may be properly *punished*; than I can see the justice of punishing him at first, without any such imputation. If this would do among men, any person in the world might be justly executed, only by putting him in the law-place of another who had committed murder; and then judging him worthy of death, as an imputed actual murderer. And if the judge of all should proceed thus, in common cases, or if it were believed to be just and right for him to do so in any case; what would all his threatenings and promises avail, in the government of the moral world? What terror to evil doers, would there be in the former; or what security in the latter, to them that do well? He will by no means clear the guilty, nor condemn the innocent: but, upon this principle, he can make any one innocent or guilty, only by imputing to him the guilt or innocence of some body else. Upon this principle when the books come to be opened, in the day of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, thousands of such transfers, never thought of before, might be found written: and whose sins we should finally be answerable for, it would be impossible for any man to tell. Can real blame-worthiness, and just desert of punishment be thus thrown upon persons,

for things they never did, and which were totally foreign from the thoughts and intents and disposition of their hearts !

Yes ; it has been said. By means of a constituted *union*, between two or more persons, there arises a kind of common personality. A community of interest and action, of loss and gain, of merit and demerit ; of right to rewards, and liability to punishments. Such constitutions are common among men ; and are never thought to be arbitrary or unreasonable. The husband and wife ; a father and his minor child ; a creditor or debtor and his legal attorney ; all the members of a corporation and their trustees, are one in law.

In many *civil* matters, they are so, I grant ; but not in *criminal* actions. A man is not hanged for a murder committed by his wife or child ; nor the heads of a corporation, for the treasons of some of its members. No one is thought *culpable*, or properly punishable, on account of the ill-conduct of another, to which he was no way accessory ; however nearly related to him, or in whatever way connected with him, that other person may have been.

It is true, we often suffer loss and damage, from the *criminal* actions of our relations, our trustees, or constituents. We are sometimes required to make compensation for the mischief done by the iniquities of those under our care, or those empowered to act for us. In human governments, such suffering is often unavoidable, or not to be avoided without great public inconvenience : In the divine government, it is always just ; because, however the suffering of one may be immediately occasioned by the sin of another, no man suffers

more than his own iniquities deserve. But sustaining loss and damage, by means of the criminality of others ; and being chargeable with the criminality itself, and so being properly punished for it as evil doers, are quite different things. Notwithstanding, therefore, both a federal and a vital union between Christ and Christians, he cannot be to *blame* for their sins. In order to make out this, they must be supposed so united, as to be properly one individual person. That merit or demerit, are not transferable from one person to another, or capable of being thrown into a common stock, like civil property ; I am persuaded is one of the plainest feelings of the moral sense, implanted in every man's mind.

And as no similitudes, nor metaphysics, unless by confounding ideas, can ever commend this notion of imputation to any man's conscience ; so, I hope, we are not put to the hard task of attempting it, in order to vindicate any of the ways of God, revealed to us in his word. Perhaps no article of the faith for which we are required earnestly to contend, looks more paradoxical ; or more like a contradiction to reason and common sense, than the one now before us ; but, could we keep clear of "darkening counsel by words without knowledge"—could we think upon it, neither *too little* nor *too much* ; it is very likely that even this, would not appear inexplicable.

Divines have long followed one another, in speaking of Christ as being properly *punished* ; but this is not the language of the Old or New Testament. I know of no text of scripture, in which the word *punishment* is used ; with reference to the sufferings of Christ, at the hand of his heavenly Father.

God, is never said to *condemn* him. *Pilate*, indeed, passed a sentence of death upon him, and the Jews put that sentence in execution. By them, he was condemned and punished; but *most unjustly*. And though whatever they did, was before determined in the counsel of the Most High: yet *their* acts herein, were not *his* acts; any more than all the unrighteous deeds done under the sun are his.

Christ suffered the curse of the law which was *due to us*; but he did not suffer it as what was *due to him*, in any way whatever. He suffered as an innocent person, voluntarily stepping in, to bear what would answer the necessary ends of the just punishment of the guilty. To reconcile the sufferings of Christ with the justice of God, it is enough to say, they were *voluntary* sufferings: Sufferings which he freely consented to, knowing what he did, and to which he had a right to consent. And this is the only way, it appears to me, in which they can ever be so reconciled. This is the plain scripture account, "*He gave himself for us*. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to *give his life*, a ransom for many." To do this, he said in heaven, *Lo, I come*: and on earth he declared, "I lay down my life *of myself*; I have power to lay it down." True, he adds, "This commandment have I received of my Father." And we know he was sent of God to do what he did, and suffer what he suffered. But the appointment of a dutiful son to a painful service, with the promise of a great reward, is not to condemn and punish him. Such was this case. Christ was promised, for his obedience unto death, that he should be exalted and extolled, and be very high. That the Heathen should be given

him for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. That he should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied.

Thus God made him to be a sin-offering; not by unwilling constraint, but by the joy set before him: by the most powerful inducements to a benevolent mind. And in all this, since there was no compulsion—no unreasonable imputation—no real punishment, there was nothing unjust.

Our next inquiry is, how are we to understand that sinners, when united to Christ by faith, are made the righteousness of God in him?

Not that they are made, in the sight of God, free from all imputation of sin, and *worthy* of the rewards of the perfectly righteous. The *benefits* of Christ's meritorious righteousness only, are made over to believers in the covenant of grace: his *righteousness itself*, is still *his*, and not *theirs*. Merit, like demerit, is ever personal and untransferable; but the consequences of either, may be transferred. As Christ, when he had undertaken the redemption of man, could justly suffer death for their sin, though still, in all respects, perfectly righteous; so they, having received him as their Redeemer, though still very sinful, and in no respect any more innocent than before, can justly inherit eternal life, as the reward of his righteousness.

On this ground, they will finally be delivered from all the penal consequences of their sins, however numerous and aggravated; and will be made as perfectly blessed to all eternity, as if they had fulfilled all righteousness in their own persons, through the longest and most trying space of probation. They might be so delivered from

all evils, and made thus happy, on their first cordially embracing the gospel, notwithstanding the original curse of the law. From that curse, Christ hath fully redeemed them. If they die in a moment after they have become his willing disciples and subjects, they are then made perfect in holiness, and immediately pass into glory. But, for wise reasons—(for the good of others, and their own greater good, and for the fuller manifestation of the grace and power of God,) it is so ordered, that while they continue in this world, they shall be sanctified but in part; and that their transgression shall be visited with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. These, tho' merciful corrections, are real punishments; and what they would neither receive nor deserve, had they a sinless righteousness properly their own. It is also appointed to them, in common with other men, once to die; and that their bodies shall sleep in the grave until the general resurrection. Christ is, nevertheless, made of God unto them righteousness, in regard to their infallible final justification, from the first moment of their receiving him, and consenting to be his. "He that believeth hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation." That is, shall never be liable to the curse of the law, or the wrath to come.

And now, what can any humble Christian wish for more? His salvation is as certain, as if it were made a matter of absolute debt to him. "If, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall

he not with him also freely give us all things?" Nor are those who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us, left to argue out the certainty of their salvation, merely from the grace of God, and from what he hath already done for them. He has, moreover, given them his word and his oath; that by these two immutable things, they might have strong consolation. "He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, says David, ordered in all things and sure; for all my salvation, and all my desire." And indeed, beyond such ample security, what can be desired by any one, who is willing to be saved by grace, and to walk humbly with God? If any reliance can be placed on his goodness, already so wonderfully manifested, or on his promise and oath, why should we want to have a demand upon his justice, for all our salvation, on the ground of a full and perfect, though imputed, *self-righteousness*.

But are there not several texts which seem favorable to this exploded high notion of merit by imputation. Those two, that I think of, which have often been so improved: Jer. xxiii. 6. "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our righteousness*." And 1 John, i. 9. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Must not the first of these passages imply, that the merit of Christ is so transferred to his people, or so held in common by them, or to be really *their* merit?

I think not. Only making a very reasonable allowance for the strong language of prophetic scripture, and no more need be under-

flood by this, than what has been above admitted and supposed: namely, that Christ is of God made to believers righteousness, to all intents and purposes of their safety and salvation.

But does not the other text assert, expressly, that the pardon of penitent Christians, and their complete sanctification, may be expected from God as a matter of strict justice?

No, surely. If it did, it would be quite inconsistent, even with itself. Had sinners a sinless righteousness properly their own, they would have no sins to confess, or to be forgiven. The humble confession, or proper forgiveness, of one who can justly have no sin imputed to him, looks, I should think, very much like a contradiction. And to assert, that God is bound in justice to remit all punishment to penitent believers, and to complete their salvation, on the ground of their own real worthiness, is certainly irreconcilably inconsistent with a thousand other texts, all over the bible. According to this notion, after the gift of faith, God could never *freely* give us any thing.

Not to insist that the words, *faithful* and *just*, may be used by the apostle as nearly synonymous expressions; I would observe, that the fulfilment of a promise, however gratuitous, is, in some sense a matter of justice. It is what a just man will ever make a point of doing; and not to do it, might be a real injury to the other party, who had calculated upon its performance. It may further be observed, that should God not fulfil the word of his grace, on which he hath caused his servants to hope, he would act dishonorably; and so would not be just to *himself*—to his own name and glory.

It remains to be enquired, in the last place; What necessity there was, or whether any, for making Christ a sin-offering, that we might be restored to the divine favor?

It has often been supposed, that God might have reconciled fallen men to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, in some other way than in and through the death of his son, if he had seen fit.

But if it could have *been* fit, in any easier way to have done it, that he should *see* fit to adopt this, must appear very unaccountable. Why all this waste of sweat, and agony, and blood! What glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, when his visage was marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men, if all his wounds and bruises, thorns and buffetings, were unnecessary! At such a sight, on that supposition, many might indeed be astonished; but no one could possibly be delighted, unless a very malicious spectator. To ascribe such sovereignty to the blessed and only potentate, as supposes him capable of doing any thing, proper or improper, wise or unwise, consistent or inconsistent, is surely not to do honor to him.

We are plainly told, that God's setting forth Christ to be a propitiation was necessary, and why it was necessary; namely, that he might be just, and the justifier of a sinner, on his believing in Jesus.

To this account of an apostle, however, the wise, the scribe, the disputer of this world, the infidel and the focinian, are ready to object. Earthly kings and judges, they will tell us, can pardon high crimes, treasons and rebellions, only on the submission of the offenders: and shall we think, that

with God, Almighty and all-merciful, there can be no remission of the smallest sin, without shedding of blood ! and such blood as Christian trinitarians suppose !

To this it may be replied ; many things are possible with men, which to the omnipotent sovereign of the universe are utterly impossible. " It is impossible for God to lie." " He cannot deny himself." He cannot act out of character, or inconsistently with any of his moral perfections. Were God as weak as man—as unwise—as liable to alter his mind, to be intimidated, and to have his hand stayed : Or could he be willing to have as weak and unstable a government, as are the governments of men ; undoubtedly, it would be very possible for him to pardon atrocious transgressors only on their repentance ; or even without repentance.

All sovereign pardons—all remissions of threatened and deserved penalties, without adequate satisfaction, weaken government, and argue its imperfection. In the all-powerful, and all perfect government of the Most High, it may therefore well be supposed, that no such pardons are ever admissible.

The sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow, are things, we are told, into which the angels desire to look. No wonder, therefore, if men, weak, inattentive, and depraved, should often err, and after all their researches, have inadequate ideas, concerning these deep things of God. And yet, to mankind in a peculiar manner, it is of most interesting importance, to look into these things, and rightly to understand them. From inaccurate conceptions respecting the redemption of Christ, and its application to sinners, have arisen systems of faith, most dishonorable to

God, and most ruinous to the souls of men. Some, by not seeing the occasion there was for the propitiation of Christ, have rejected that doctrine altogether ; imagining that, instead of displaying the marvellous benevolence of God to man, it represents him as implacable and unmerciful. Others, from much the same cause, have been led to deny that the death of Christ, considered merely under the notion of suffering, constituted any part of his propitiation. Others, from apprehending that our divine Redeemer connected himself with the whole human race, by a kind of personal union ; and by tasting death, strictly purchased release from punishment, for every man, have inferred the infallible salvation of all mankind. Many others, reputed very orthodox, have imbibed such a notion of a mystical commutation of iniquity and holiness, between Christ and believers, as is subversive of all rational ideas of divine justice ; and as excludes effectually, after the gift of faith, all possibility of any farther divine grace, to the sinful children of men. And this, they think a glorious device of infinite wisdom and goodness ; because, by means of it, they can sin *personally*, as much as they please, in heart, word and deed ; feeling all the while perfectly easy and comfortable, as having no *imputed* sin. Thus they sit down under the shadow of their supposed Saviour with great delight ; and his fancied fruit is sweet to their taste. To force perfectly selfish creatures, or even misinformed Christians, out of their delicious hiding places of falsehood ; is, certainly, no very hopeful undertaking.

This enquiry was designed, to guard against dangerous misconceptions of the glorious plan of our redemption. Whether the thoughts

and proofs which have been given are well adapted to this end, readers of every age and capacity must judge for themselves. If the representation of this all important subject, now exhibited, be not the right one; the writer wishes to be told, and in a manner that he can understand, wherein it is wrong.

The Gospel a Doctrine according to Godliness.

(Continued from page 332.)

NUMBER IV.

V. **T**HAT the gospel is a doctrine according to Godliness, will further appear from a summary view of the general tenor of its precepts and prohibitions.

The gospel not only requires repentance and faith, as the grand and comprehensive condition of its blessings, and indispensibly necessary to pardon and eternal life; but likewise enjoins universal holiness, and forbids all iniquity, all unrighteousness and sin, all moral evil without exception.

It commands us to be holy in all manner of conversation—to abstain from fleshly lusts, and from all appearance of evil. Yea, the gospel as exhibited in the sacred writings of the New-Testament, requires all holiness, and forbids all sin, not only in *general* terms, or by *general* precepts and prohibitions; but it also descends to *minute particulars*. It bears a particular and full testimony against the various particular lusts and sins, and evil practices, in which the wickedness of mankind is wont to operate and be expressed—against the various particular lusts and sinful passions, works and ways, which are opposed to or inconsistent with real holiness in heart and life.

Are selfishness, pride, hatred, revenge, bitterness, anger, wrath,

clamor, evil speaking and malice—unrighteousness, covetousness, cruelty, oppression and extortion—fraud, deceit, falsehood, lying, cheating, theft, robbery and murder—intemperance, revelling, rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness—every species of uncleanness, foolish talking and jesting, lasciviousness, fornication, adultery and incest—sorcery—idolatry—contempt of God, neglect of his worship, profane cursing and swearing and blasphemy, are all these and suchlike things, contrary to true piety and real religion, and the habitual allowed indulgence and practice of them inconsistent with the spirit and practice of real Godliness?—And who can attentively read the New-Testament, and not be sensible, that these and all suchlike things, are really forbidden and testified against, as odious to God, and exposing to his wrath, and excluding from his kingdom all those, who persevere in the allowed indulgence and practice of them? On the other hand, does Godliness imply supreme love to God, worshipping him in spirit and in truth, serving him with reverence and godly fear, conforming in practice to his institutions and commands, doing all to his glory? Does it imply sincere benevolence to neighbors, to fellow-creatures, to the evil as well as to the good, not only to friends, but also to enemies, doing good to all as we have opportunity—following God as dear children, and walking in love after the example of Christ? Does it imply kindness, tender heartedness, forgiveness, humility, meekness, condescension, gentleness, long-suffering, compassion, mercy, sympathy, hospitality, justice, truth, uprightness, integrity, faithfulness, industry, sobriety, temperance, chastity, a ready and faithful perform-

ance of all the duties and offices of every character, of every relation, of every employment, as of rulers, subjects, citizens, ministers of the gospel, hearers of the word, brethren in the faith and profession of the gospel, husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants? Does Godliness imply these and such like things? And can any one read the New-Testament, without a full conviction, that they are all there enjoined—expressly required, and abundantly pressed and inculcated? And it is to be remembered, that the scriptures hold forth the idea, that all these prohibitions and commands are delivered under the sanction of *divine authority*—that they are commands and prohibitions, not of men, but of the great God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

How undeniably evident is it, then, that the gospel, as preached by Christ and his apostles, is, in this particular point of view, a doctrine according to Godliness, plainly designed and admirably well adapted to inculcate, enforce and promote it?

VI. The same will also appear from the account given in the gospel, of the character of those who alone will be approved by God, and finally happy.

Who, of all the human race, according to the account given by Christ and his apostles, will be approved of God, and happy in the world to come? None, whose character is prevailingly that of the unrighteous or unclean—none, who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: but, the poor in spirit—the meek—they who hunger and thirst after righteousness—the merciful—the pure in heart—the peace-makers—they who hear Christ's sayings, and do them—they who do the will of his Father

who is in heaven—they who deny themselves, take up their cross and follow him, and forsake all things for his sake—they who have the spirit of Christ, and walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, and thro' the spirit mortify the deeds of the body, crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts—they who do his commandments, and endure to the end. Such, in brief, is the character of those whom God will approve in the day of final account and admit to dwell in his presence forever. Hence, the doctrine of the gospel upon this head, is most evidently a doctrine according to Godliness. And as we wish to be approved of God, and happy forever, let us view, with attention, the character drawn by Christ and his apostles, as the only one which will be finally approved and blessed, and transcribe and copy it, in our own tempers and conduct.

NUMBER V.

VII. **T**HE calls, offers and warnings, promises and threatenings, contained in the gospel, plainly evince its design and tendency to promote true religion.

Only an imperfect specimen of these can now be exhibited. The Messiah, long before his incarnation, said, by the prophet Isaiah, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." God, by the same prophet said, "Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your

soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me : hear, and your souls shall live ; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts : and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him ; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." In the same spirit, Christ, when on earth, stood and cried, saying, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.—" Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart ; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

The apostle Paul states the purport of the apostolic address to mankind, in the following manner, viz. "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us : we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

To the faithful and obedient, the inspired writings abound with the most gracious and animating declarations and promises : "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved. "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be

tempted above that ye are able ; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.—" God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge, to lay hold on the hope set before us —" For he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.—" Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. "He that overcometh shall inherit all things ; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

On the other hand, the scriptures are equally explicit, in addressing the most solemn warnings and threatenings to the wicked, and in terrible denunciations of divine wrath upon the impenitent and finally disobedient.—" The axe is laid unto the root of the trees : therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. He that believeth not shall be damned. Unto them who are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, God will render indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile. No whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words : for because of these things cometh the wrath of

God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them.—How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?—For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.—It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.—But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and forcerers, and idolaters, and the liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.”

Can we read—can we hear, and attentively consider these and such-like gracious calls and offers, and friendly and solemn warnings, and great and precious promises, and awfully tremendous threatenings, and view them altogether, without perceiving it is our indispensable duty, our truest wisdom and highest interest to repent and turn to God—to be reconciled to him—to comply with and obey his will revealed in the gospel—to live soberly, and righteously, and godly in this present world?—Without perceiving, that to *this* we are under obligations infinitely great—that to this we have all reasonable and desirable encouragements—and that we shall be left utterly inexcusable, and must expect an aggravated punishment, if we refuse or neglect it? and of consequence, that the gospel, on account of its calls, offers, warnings, threatenings and promises, is admirably adapted to bring us to God—to persuade and constrain us to return to him, to love and serve him, and to enforce, and excite to the exercise and practice of universal holi-

ness—of true religion, in all its branches—in all its extent?

(*To be continued.*)

On the leading of the Spirit: Or, The way in which the Spirit of God leads men is by imparting to them, and preserving in them a holy temper.

OUR Lord once said to his disciples, “When he the Spirit of truth is come he will *guide* you into all truth.” And St. Paul said to the Romans, “As many as are *led* by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.” And he tells the Galatians, “If ye be *led* by the spirit, ye are not under the law.” From these and many other expressions of the inspired volume, we are led to suppose, that the influence or guidance of the holy spirit is necessary to the knowledge of divine truth, and for our direction in the way of holiness. It is evident, even from observation, that the judgment which a man forms concerning religious objects is not determined by mere intellectual light or evidence, but the spirit or disposition of the heart has a great share in the determination of the judgment. Hence it is said, “The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual, judgeth all things.” “No man can say that Jesus is the Christ but by the Holy Ghost.” “Ye have an unction from the holy one, and ye know all things.”

It is not a matter of idle speculation, but of great use and benefit, thoroughly to investigate, the various springs and causes which operate in the determina-

tion of men's opinions and conduct in life, particularly with respect to matters of religion. If this subject be thoroughly examined, I am persuaded it will be found, that there are certain biasses in the hearts of men which govern their judgments and practice in life—some spirit which directs their sentiments and conduct. This is true with respect to such as pursue good or evil courses. They have a fancy, a liking or prepossession in favor of certain objects, which actuate them in their pursuits. It is not mere information communicated to the unfeeling intellect which will be any spur to action. In order for this some spirit or disposition must possess the soul; which has a sovereign influence in the disposal of men's opinions and pursuits.

We read of the spirit of the world and the spirit which is of God. A spirit is as well necessary to account for evil actions as for good. The spirit which is of the world, admits of a great variety of modifications; although as to its essential traits it may be the same. The tastes of men are different which are their guides in the walks of life. Men give a preference to the courses which best correspond with their tastes; hence they are prompted to believe such courses are right, and to act accordingly. In a wrong course of conduct men are governed by a wrong spirit. In a virtuous course of conduct they are governed by a good spirit. In each case they are led by the spirit which dwells in them. The good man has for his guide the good spirit of God. He delights in the law of God after the inward man; hence he is induced to obey it. The paths of virtue are agreeable to his taste; therefore is he

led to pursue them. As duty occurs, his love to it will influence him to a ready compliance. Is reverence to the Deity a duty, the sense which he has of the divine dignity and excellency will excite him to pay him worship and veneration. Is beneficence to his fellow-creatures in distress, a duty which offers itself to a good man, the benevolent feelings of his heart will prompt him to afford relief. The guidance of the spirit, or an inward principle of goodness is a much more effectual teacher and stimulator to what is fit, than mere abstract speculation.

On the other hand, a corrupt spirit or a depraved taste, will lead a man under the influence of it, to form erroneous opinions concerning moral matters, and will have an efficacious influence upon him to pursue a vicious course of conduct. If we attend to human nature we may thence find, as well as from the scriptures of truth, that men are led by some powerful spirit in that great variety of courses which they take. This is the great spring of action amongst mankind, and without which the rational world would be wholly idle—a universal torpor would take place—a total stagnation of all the active powers in human nature. There is a spirit in man which operates to produce perpetual motion in the intellectual world, and which is as efficacious as the law of attraction in the natural world.

As all men are governed by some powerful spirit, so the children of God in particular are under the conduct of the good spirit of God. By virtue of that holy principle implanted in them, and which constantly dwells in them, they are spontaneously led to a virtuous course of conduct. Although

their intellectual powers may be small and their acquirements in knowledge indifferent, yet by virtue of that gracious disposition of which they are possessed, they will be led to walk in the unerring paths of virtue much better than others, greatly superior to them as to intellectual endowments. When persons in the exercise of such a good disposition are led into the knowledge of religious truths, and to a compliance with their duty, they then have the leading of the spirit.

But it may be enquired, are not men exposed to be led into error when they suffer themselves to be conducted by such an instinctive principle or spiritual impulse? To which it may be replied, there is no necessary danger in this case with regard to those who are under the guidance of the spirit of God: for this spirit is a spirit of truth, and begets a relish for the truth, and so far as we are governed by it we shall be led into all truth, both with respect to our judgments and practice. True it is, those who are under the influence of a false spirit are exposed to error in being led by this spirit; therefore are we called upon to try the spirits; and there are laid down in the scriptures certain marks and rules whereby we may ascertain the truth or falsehood of the spirit by which we are led; so that there is no necessity of deception.

From the view which we have taken of the leading of the spirit we are enabled to account for the corrupt and pernicious doctrines which have been embraced by mankind. These proceed not from a want of natural powers in men, nor from the want of sufficient external light and information but from the influence of a false spirit.

The God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not. They are left to strong delusions, that they should believe a lie who had pleasure in unrighteousness. They love darkness rather than light. They have no relish for the sublime truths of religion. They are therefore foolishness to them. Their taste gives a determination to their understanding and judgment. The depraved bias on their hearts is the source of their errors.

Hence we infer a reason why in the scriptures men are condemned for their infidelity and heresy; it is because they are influenced by a false spirit or a vicious bias of heart—they fall in with such sentiments as agree to their taste, and reject others. It is on this account they are criminal. Therefore an heretic after the first and second admonition is to be rejected. Could wrong sentiments in religion be attributed to any other source, than the seduction of an evil spirit, or a vicious propensity of heart, they would not be censurable, but flowing from a depraved heart, they merit condemnation.

Upon the whole, since our coming to the knowledge of the truth and walking in the paths of holiness, depend on the guidance of the spirit; let us be importunate with God, with whom is the residue of the spirit, that he would replenish our hearts with his grace, that we might be delivered from darkness and error, and led into all truth, and be directed in the paths of righteousness. This leading of the spirit has more efficacy to keep us in the strait line of truth and duty, than all the external light and helps which we can enjoy, without the assistance of this internal guide. And since this

rightly conducting spirit is to be obtained by the bestowment of God, let us make earnest application to the God of all grace that he would give us that unction from the holy one whereby we may know all things.

HEMERA.

An account of a work of Divine grace in a Revival of Religion, in a number of Congregations in New-England, in the years 1798 and 1799, in a series of Letters to the Editors.

[Continued from page 347.]

LETTER XVII.

From the Rev. JOSEPH WASHBURN of Farmington.

GENTLEMEN,

ONE of the most important objects to which you have devoted the pages of your useful Magazine, is the conveyance of religious intelligence; and especially the publication of particular narratives of the late revival of religion in many of our towns.

At a time like the present, when the powers of darkness, and a disbelieving world, are making uncommon exertions, and boasting of uncommon success, in opposing the kingdom of Christ, it is peculiarly incumbent on his friends, in every part of the world, to exert themselves for its support. They ought to be united in prayer; and, as far as possible to make united exertions to propagate the gospel; and to endeavor to strengthen the hands, and encourage the hearts of each other, by communicating intelligence of its success, and giving particular narratives of any remarkable revivals of religion, by uncommon effusions of the holy spirit. The publication of such narratives, if written judiciously,

and so as to bring clearly into view the distinguishing traits of the work, may answer many useful and important purposes, both to the church and world. They are a suitable memorial of the goodness of God, to be handed down to posterity.—They greatly confirm the distinguishing doctrines of the gospel, and, by a divine blessing, may awaken the careless—convince the disbelieving—comfort and rejoice the hearts of God's people—and, in various ways, cause thanksgivings to abound unto God.

From a conviction of these things, I am induced to give a narrative of the recent work of God in this place, to be published, if upon examination it be thought worthy.

It may be useful, in the first place to give a brief view of a revival of religion in this Society, in the year 1795, and of the subsequent state of religion here to the time more particularly respected in this narrative.

In the fall of the year 1793, and through the winter following, while the Society was destitute of a settled minister, and the pulpit was supplied by candidates, there appeared, as I have been informed, an uncommon attention to the means of grace, and a hopeful prospect of a time of great refreshing from the presence of the Lord. But the hopes of the people of God were greatly damped, and the work apparently interrupted, by means of an unhappy contention which took place in the Society, and threw the minds of the people into an uncommon degree of irritation.—But the good spirit of God, tho' grieved, did not wholly depart: and about the time of my ordination to the work of the ministry, which was in May 1795, an uncommon attention and seri-

ousness became apparent throughout the Society. The divine influences came down like the dew, and like the rain upon the mown grass, in still and gentle showers. The work was unattended with noise, or enthusiasm—caused a general solemnity through the Society, and met with little or no open opposition.

Within the course of about one year, 55 persons were added to the church—the greater part of whom dated their hope from that revival.

The effect of that day of divine power and merciful visitation, was very apparent both in the Society and church; especially in the latter, in the spirit of union and harmony which appeared; and particularly in their attempts to revive and support Christian discipline—in which they were happily successful. In attempting this, they were necessitated, in several instances, to proceed thro' all the steps of discipline, even to the last. They proceeded however, with an apparent spirit of meekness and love—with great moderation, and perfect unanimity.

The attention to religion continued to be nearly the same for about a year—after which it evidently declined, and the minds of the people in general, became gradually more insensible to divine things, till they were greatly absorbed by the cares, and vain amusements of the world. In the fall of 1798, religion was, apparently, but little tho't of, except by some of the professing people of God—and even among them, an unusual degree of luke-warmness seemed to prevail. The distressing reflection now arose, that as we had been favored with a gracious visit of God, and had so soon grieved away his spirit, it was to be feared that re-

ligion would now continue to decline for many years—and that if it should thus decline for ten or twenty years, as it had done for two or three, the situation of Zion, here, must be deplorable indeed.

At this time God began to appear in power and great glory, in a number of towns in the vicinity, as he had done for a year before, in places more distant. An account of these things reached us, and became the subject of conversation among Christians—but it appeared to have little or no effect.

The first appearance of special divine power and presence, which was noticed, was in Feb. 1799. It began in an uncommon attention and concern, among the people of God, in view of the situation of this Society, and in a disposition to unite in prayer for the divine presence, and a revival of religion.

Hearing so much of the goings of God, in the vicinity, and having been in some measure a witness of it, I advised with the deacons, and principal brethren of the church, upon the expediency of opening lectures, and attempting to call the attention of the people to the events which were taking place and to their own situation. Upon conversing with them, I found them already awake upon the subject; and it was concluded and advised, that a request should be circulated among the brethren, to come together for prayer, and to consult upon our situation. On the Lord's day previous to their meeting, a discourse was delivered in public upon the importance of a revival of religion, and of Christians being united and earnest in prayer, that God would revive his work. On the Monday evening following, a number of the brethren convened,

as had been proposed, and spent the evening in prayer, and in conversation upon the divine power displayed in neighboring places, and the expediency of our setting apart times for fervent social prayer that God would not pass us by. Many discouragements presented themselves to our minds, and unbelief suggested evil things. A little before, we had been favored with the dew of divine influences, quickening sinners, and reviving God's children, while the towns around, were in a manner dry. Now, we were left to parch and dry, while a cloud, in full view, had passed almost quite round us, to revive and refresh them, with copious showers. Thus situated, the divine sovereignty was evident. Our circumstances answered to the sign which God gave to Gideon of the fleece which was at one time wet with the dew, while the ground around was dry; and at another time, perfectly dry, while the dew had distilled copiously on every side. It was however the unanimous opinion of the brethren present, that it was for us to pray, and for God, who is merciful and gracious, to dispose of events according to his own good pleasure. It was therefore agreed that there should be a meeting, at least once a fortnight, for members of the church, not excluding others who might wish to attend, for the purpose of special united prayer for a revival of religion in this place, and for the prosperity of Zion at large. Soon after this, numbers, in different parts of the Society, began to enquire respecting the meetings, and expressed a wish to attend. This was considered as an omen for good; and upon the encouragement which now began to appear, it was determined to open lectures at the Meeting house, and at some of the

School-houses, in the extreme parts of the Society. The first was at the Meeting-house. Two neighboring Ministers were present; one of whom delivered a sermon, and the other a solemn address and exhortation. The congregation, which was unexpectedly full, appeared solemn and attentive. In the evening another meeting was attended, equally full, and apparently still more solemn and deeply attentive: And it afterwards appeared that the minds of many were then, and even before, greatly exercised respecting religion, though they had not divulged it. From this time we had frequent meetings, which were attended by great numbers. Even when the weather was exceedingly stormy and tedious, as was several times the case upon the days appointed for lectures, it had very little effect, if any, upon the fulness of the congregation. Persons of both sexes, and of almost every age, and many from the distance of 4 or 5 miles, and some still further, were to be seen pressing thro' storms, and every obstacle, to attend the meetings—such was their anxiety to hear the word, and to know what they must do to be saved. Nor was it an attention to conferences and lectures—or a disposition to prefer their own times of worship, to God's time and institutions.—Those who were disposed to attend lectures and conferences, appeared equally careful to attend public worship upon the sabbath.

My house was also the almost daily resort of youth, and others, earnestly enquiring respecting the things of their peace. The scenes were frequently very affecting.—Persons from 12 or 15 up to 30 or 40 years of age, had just discovered, as to any realizing sense, that they were sinners. They felt, and

in tears acknowledged, that they were under the condemnation of God's righteous law—that they had, all their lives, neglected and despised a kind Saviour and trodden under foot his blood. As some expressed themselves, it seemed that they had been all their lives walking upon a most dangerous precipice, constantly exposed to destruction, and yet ignorant of their situation. They seemed to awake as from a dream. Some wondered that parents and Ministers had not before informed them of their situation. The things which they now heard, they tho't new; tho' they had been thousands of times, stated in their hearing, and inculcated upon them by parents and ministers. They now considered religion as the one thing needful; and were astonished at their former stupidity and folly in disregarding it; and that they had entertained such loose and erroneous ideas respecting the nature of religion, and the doctrines and requisitions of the gospel. Those of the youth who were seriously impressed, now reflected on their former gaiety, vanity and sinful amusements, with bitterness and entire disapprobation.

Being brought by the power of God, and an awakened conscience, to view things in the light of scripture and of eternity, they considered the customs and practices commonly followed by youth, as very dangerous and pernicious—tending to exclude the thoughts of God and eternity—cherish vicious propensities—render the mind light and vain—and inconsistent with doing all things to the glory of God. An attempt which was made soon after the awakening commenced, to introduce a dancing master, and set up a school for the instruction of the youth

and children in the art of dancing; and which, though with much difficulty, at length succeeded—had a happy effect upon the minds of some of the serious youth, tending to increase their impressions, that in a time of such uncommon attention to religion in the neighboring towns, and such a hopeful beginning among ourselves, any should attend, or encourage the youth and children to attend upon a school the tendency, and usual effect of which is to banish seriousness, and render the mind frivolous and vain—greatly shocked their minds. The open opposition, also, which was made by some, in express and pointed language, most bitterly, and profanely scoffing at those Ministers and Christians, who appeared engaged in promoting the work, had a similar effect. It convinced them more and more that “madness is in the heart of man;” and that God is just in condemning sinners and casting them off forever, and led them to admire that *they* should be in any measure awakened to a sense of their danger, and not left to the same blindness and stupidity which they saw in others. Thus was manifested the wisdom and power of God, to carry on his own work by what means he pleases, or even by the opposition of enemies.

It appeared however to be the will of God to suffer various hindrances to the work, that it was not so great, nor extensive in this, as in many of the neighboring places. A great many in the Society have not been apparently moved by all which has taken place, and the divine power displayed here, and in the vicinity. Numbers have, through the whole time, given great evidence of being in a state of awful delusion,

with respect to themselves, and the things of God and religion. Many who would not be thought to oppose, and even who speculatively believe in the reality and necessity of experimental religion, and of the agency of the holy spirit, in renewing sinners, have been left by a just and holy God, in a very careless and secure state.

Doubtless many, however, have been arraigned at the bar of conscience, and experienced the strivings of God's spirit, who have wholly concealed their feelings, and perhaps have fallen into their former ease, and carnal vain peace. Many have, by a solemn and constant attendance on means, manifested a concern with respect to their spiritual state and prospects, who, so far as I know, have never opened their minds in conversation on the subject with any person. About one hundred have been so far impressed, as to enquire seriously and anxiously, respecting the way of life by a Saviour; and to converse freely upon the state of their souls. Of these, about seventy have appeared to be under deep conviction of sin, and in great distress of mind—though some, to a far greater degree than others; and in a few instances, attended with very uncommon marks and expressions of the obstinacy and enmity of the carnal heart. Sixty-one have been admitted into the church within one year, viz. from August 1799, to August 1800. A few of these date their hope from the revival in this place in 1795, mentioned in the beginning of this letter, and some still earlier: But by the present refreshing from the divine presence, have been hopefully quickened, and strengthened, and freed from those doubts and fears which had kept them from duty.

Several, who have not yet made a profession of religion, have it in contemplation, and it is to be hoped that there are some others, among those who have been under serious impressions, who have become truly reconciled to God, though they may not have divulged their feelings, or professed to entertain a hope.

Among those who have been the subjects of this work of God, there are some who had been peculiarly vain, careless and opposed to the doctrines and practice of religion, and whose minds had been wholly absorbed by the follies and vanities of youth—in the pursuit of which their ardor had been exceeded by but few. In relation therefore to their former companions, and all who feel themselves reproved by their example, it might be expected that their present situation would render the words of the Apostle, 1 Pet. iv. 4, very applicable.

I would add, with respect to the subjects of this work, that about two thirds of them are in youth, and the rest in middle life, and a little rising. And I think it is worthy of remark, that there are many more, in proportion to the number of families in this Society, who are from families where religion is professed and carefully inculcated by one or both of the parents, than from those of a different description.

With respect to the external appearance of this work, it has been remarkably free from noise and enthusiasm, and every kind of irregularity. In all the meetings there was the utmost order, and decorum; and at the close, whether in the day-time, or evening, all who attended, dispersed immediately, and silently, to their places of residence, so that the enemies

of the work were never gratified, or furnished, with an objection against it from any enthusiastic, or irregular conduct appearing, either at the meetings, or in returning from them. Perhaps this might be, in some measure owing to the means used with those under impressions, and the manner of conducting the meetings.

The great and important object, in addressing sinners, was, to set the most essential and important truths in a simple and plain manner, before the mind, without making any violent assault upon the passions; or attempting to frighten and terrify without communicating instruction. It was thought undesirable that the mind should be greatly affected and distressed, except in view, and by means of the truth. But whatever trembling anxiety and solicitude of mind was in this way excited, was supposed not to be irrational, or in any way dangerous, but highly favorable and promising.

In conducting the meetings, no invitation was given, to those under impressions, nor to any who were considered hopeful converts, to relate their personal experiences, or address themselves to others by way of exhortation, or instruction. Nor has there been a single instance, so far as is known, of any one's manifesting an inclination to do this. For the most part they have appeared to think themselves so ignorant, and so unworthy, that instead of exhorting or teaching others it became them to sit at the feet of the meanest to receive instruction. Nor was it much practised in private conversation to relate to each other their own personal religious experiences—much less were they disposed to relate them to every one, or from house to house. Instead

of this the conversation in families, and neighborhoods, where the work mostly prevailed, was chiefly upon the character and work of God—the wonders of redeeming love and sanctifying grace—intelligence respecting the goings of the all-conquering Lamb, in subduing his enemies to his feet, and making them his willing subjects in the day of his power—and, in general, the nature and importance of the truths and doctrines of the word of God.

After this general account of the progress and extent of the work, and of the order and decorum which have characterized it; a more particular statement of the nature of the personal views and exercises of those who have been the subjects either of conviction, or hopeful conversion, will be necessary. This is a principal thing to which an inquisitive and judicious reader will look, in a narrative of a supposed revival of religion, in order to judge whether it be indeed a work of God or a mere delusion.

And here I would observe that the views and exercises of those under conviction, were essentially the same tho' very various as to the means and manner of their beginning—and of their degree and continuance. The greater part were for sometime in a state of thoughtfulness and consideration, before they were the subjects of much distress or conviction of sin. Several were awakened and experienced great concern of mind, before they knew of any others in the Society being in a similar situation—and before any thing unusual had been done to call up their attention. Some would point out what they supposed the means of exciting their attention and concern. Others could recollect noth-

ing, in particular, as having been the means of this. Yet, so it was, that religion now appeared of infinite importance to them; and those things which a little before they could not fix their attention upon, they were now unable to banish from their minds. Some were suddenly alarmed, and affected, chiefly from sympathy; or the impressive scene of the meetings and the solemn things they heard, and in this way were excited to an examination which issued apparently in a genuine conviction of sin. And some few, after having been proof against the power of sympathy, and passed, unaffected, thro' the most likely time, in a human view, were afterwards arrested, and caused to tremble at the bar of conscience. The commandment came—sin revived, and they found themselves in a lost and wretched state.

In the first stages of concern, the subjects were generally most affected with particular sins; and not so deeply sensible of the plague of their hearts. They considered themselves transgressors and condemned by the divine law. Innumerable sins of omission and commission would rise to the view of their mind with the aggravations of having neglected the divine calls and warnings and abused great mercy—and a sense of danger, and fear of divine wrath greatly affected them.

While in this situation, and being yet "ignorant of God's righteousness," or the perfect purity of his nature—the extent and spirituality of his law—and the impossibility of salvation by their own doings, they have "gone about to establish their own righteousness"—fled to external duties—to prayer—to resolutions of amendment, and various schemes to recommend

themselves to the divine favor; and thus refuse to "submit themselves to the righteousness of God"—the way of acceptance and peace by Jesus Christ.

As the work of conviction proceeded, they were driven from their various false refuges, and obtained a clearer view of the spiritual nature and extent of the divine law, and a more realizing sense of the corruption of their hearts—the fountain of iniquity and pollution within, from which all actual sins flow.

It was the case with some, while in this state that their passions were less moved and affected than before. While in the first stages of conviction, in thinking or speaking of their guilt and danger, it was common for them to weep, freely.—But now they were unable to weep. They went about bowed down with a kind of astonishment and horror, in view of their dreadful guilt and hardness of heart. They now considered themselves more stupid and hardened than ever. They supposed their convictions had left them, and that they were about to be given up to a reprobate mind. And they considered their being unable to shed a tear, as an evidence of this, when at the same time, they were in such distress in view of their situation, that they were almost incapacitated for labor or business—and in a great measure deprived of sleep and appetite for food.

It was generally the case with those under deep conviction that they in a greater or less degree, experienced sensible enmity, and opposition of heart against the character of God—particularly his sovereignty in having mercy on whom he will have mercy, and hardening whom he will. There were several instances in particular

in which a wise and sovereign God permitted the enmity and obstinacy of the carnal heart, to be manifested in an awful manner, and to an astonishing degree. Under a full conviction of the truth, their hearts would rise in bitter opposition against it. While conscience like a knowing worm preyed upon them within, a view of the divine character, and the way of salvation proposed in the gospel, which was very clear before them, and in which they saw their dependence, excited the enmity of their hearts, and filled them with anguish—and every instance in which they saw any of their friends or acquaintance brought apparently, to embrace the gospel, and to delight in the word and service of God, filled them with a kind of envy—with a pain they could not describe. They would say “they experienced the pains of Hell.” But the instances of this kind were very few. The conviction and distress of the greater part, rose not to such an height. In this respect there was a great variety. But whatever difference was observable in the degree of distress, and sensible enmity experienced or the time of its continuance, yet with respect to the points of conviction, or the truths in view of which the mind was affected, there was a very great uniformity. They were, almost without exception, brought to feel and acknowledge, previous to any permanent relief and hope—that they were wholly evil, and perfectly helpless in themselves—that all their strivings and resolutions, had been in such a manner, and from such motives, that they were not merely in vain; but were a practical rejection of the way of acceptance by Christ—that it was not in their hearts,

and never would be, without divine influence, to ask for mercy aright, or to embrace Jesus Christ, as he is freely offered in the gospel—that they were therefore, in the hands of a sovereign God, whose law and gospel they had abused, and who would act his own pleasure whether to renew them, and bring them to a submission and reconciliation to himself, and thus form them vessels of mercy, unto glory; or, to give them up to be vessels of wrath, to display his justice and power—and that their only ground of encouragement and hope, in this situation, was the doctrine of the divine purpose of election; or determination to renew, sanctify and save many, even of the chief of sinners.

With respect to the manner and circumstances, in which the hopeful converts obtained relief, and the degree of their joy and peace, there has been also a variety. Some few were very suddenly relieved from their distress, and filled with adoring and admiring views of God and the divine Saviour—they saw God in all things. In this respect all things, even in the natural world, appeared new to them. The divine agency, perfection and glory appeared wherever they cast their eyes—all things seemed to praise God, and they desired to be employed in his praise forever. And having such a clear and delightful perception of the glory of God, in his works and word, they began soon to “abound in hope.” But with respect to the greater part, they were brought very gradually to entertain a hope that they were reconciled to God, and did not soon attain to any considerable degree of the rejoicing or “assurance of hope.” When their distress, arising from sensible opposi-

tion to the character and word of God, began to cease, it was common for them to be somewhat alarmed, and to say they feared they should fall into their former ease and stupidity; yet manifested no disposition to neglect, or relax their attention to religion; and in general, after examining themselves and comparing their exercises for several days, or weeks, they supposed, they discovered signs of gracious affections. They were not disposed, however, in general, to be confident, in their conclusion, and with respect to many, their hope was often interrupted. They were often heard to say, they found so much wickedness and deceitfulness in their own hearts, that, after all, they knew not but they were given up to delusion, and should perish—that, if this were to be the case, God would be just—they were willing God should reign—they were suited with the bible—they wished for no other gospel or plan of salvation—they desired to be saved in no other way, than by the free grace of God through Jesus Christ—and at intervals, in a reflex view of these, and similar feelings and exercises, they have concluded that, if they were not deceived, the love of God has been indeed shed abroad in their hearts.

The hopeful converts, in general, have appeared very far from a disposition to think highly of themselves, or their attainments in religion; and especially from a spirit of rash judging, or censuring others. They appear disposed to hope the best of others—to promote the good of all—to discharge relative and social duties—to attend carefully upon all the institutions of religion, and manifest a tender regard for the salva-

tion of souls, and the advancement of the cause of God in the world. They appear to be possessed, also, of a good degree of the spirit of suffering—a spirit of meekness and patience under injuries, without retaliation; especially, of injurious and hard speeches from those of a scoffing, or an opposing persecuting spirit—agreeably to the direction of the Apostle, “dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves—recompense to no man evil for evil—be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.” In view of these effects, how desirable that the work which produces them might prevail, and become universal. Surely they are the effects of a religion which is divine—a religion, which, though when opposed it may occasion a sword, yet if embraced and practised by all, would form happy families, happy societies, and a happy world.

Having sketched this general outline of the work, I might proceed, and detail some interesting particulars. But these I shall reserve for a future communication.

In the mean time,

I am, gentleman,

With much respect,

Yours, &c.

JOSEPH WASHBURN.

Farmington, Nov. 1800.

(To be continued.)

A Narrative of the conversion of a Family in the State of Delaware.

MESS'RS EDITORS,

I HAVE read, with peculiar satisfaction, in your useful Magazine, accounts of the marvellous displays of divine power and sovereign grace, in the conversion of sinners, in the day in which we live.—When the reflecting

mind looks back to God's wonders of old, it has this pleasing evidence that his grace is still the same, and produces similar effects in the human heart, in different ages of the world.

To such as delight in the triumphs of divine grace, it is presumed that the following account of God's merciful dealings with a family, in the *DELAWARE STATE*, some years ago, will be acceptable. If you think it will subserve the cause of truth and piety, by giving it a place in your instructive Magazine, you will gratify one of your readers; but if, in your better judgment, you think that its publication will prevent a piece, calculated to do more good, I shall rest satisfied that this should be omitted.—I can avouch for the facts; but I think it proper to conceal the name of the family, and its constituent parts, to which I shall have a reference in the following narration.

THERE was a Gentleman of a good interest and respectability, in the county of New-Castle, in the *STATE OF DELAWARE*, who was educated in the arminian principles. He had an exalted idea of the merit of good external moral conduct, in the sight of God, and viewed such a conduct as laying an ample foundation for divine acceptance. His principles appeared to be reduced to practice. Thus he was punctual in all his dealings with his fellow-men, and he always considered his promise as good as his bond on any occasion. He was zealous in going to church, and in using a form of prayer, night and morning in his family, and punctual in attending, externally to the common duties of the table, before and after eating.—But he was,

also zealous in opposing the idea of special grace in conversion, and all those doctrines intimately connected therewith—such as the natural opposition of the human heart to the divine government.—The doctrines of particular election and the certain perseverance of the saints.—In short, he strenuously held, that the great cause of the difference in the character and moral states of men originated in themselves. This gentleman not only adopted the above system, in the regulation of his own private conduct, but laid it at the foundation of his family education.—Thus he appeared to live, and thus to die. He left, at his decease, three sons and two daughters, the eldest shortly after, died in the American Army, in the revolutionary war. The two remaining sons, with their eldest sister, lived together in the mansion of their deceased parent, and the younger sister was married to a young gentleman in the vicinity. These two brothers with their eldest sister lived together in great harmony, in one family; no doubt, but the course of their education had a very powerful influence in their family agreement.

About twelve months after the death of their father, the youngest brother, as he returned from church, after the public services of the sabbath, and after hearing a sermon which inculcated nothing more than good external moral conduct, took up the divine oracles, in order to find the text of his Minister: But providentially, after opening the sacred book, the first place which struck his sight, was *Rom. viii. 30.* "Moreover, whom he did predestinate them he also called." These words filled his mind with a sudden dreadful terror, and awoke him from the

pleasing delusion, that he should enjoy the everlasting favor of his creator on the foundation of his good moral conduct. Upon this sudden shock, he shut the sacred book, from a fear of examining the doctrine of divine predestination, which was an object of his greatest hatred. He tried to turn off his mind from a subject which gave him an anguish he had never before experienced ; but all his struggles to get the terrifying object out of view were in vain.

The question came home with irresistible force to conscience, "have you ever been effectually called ?" Tho' reluctantly he was obliged to answer this question in the negative. The next question, which came to his mind, was, what is effectual calling ? This was a puzzling question, which he must answer, or run the risk of everlasting woe. Here the heart proved itself to be deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Upon this question being urged upon the mind, what is effectual calling ? He ruminated, and at last his heart invented the following solution.—Altho' I have been very moral ; yet there are many things in which I have erred—I have spent too much time in gay company—I have attended balls—I have visited my friends and relations, on my return from church, on the Sabbath-day, instead of returning home and reading my bible. He resolved to quit those practices and perform those duties, in which he supposed effectual calling consisted : and immediately, the comfort, that he was not disobedient to the heavenly call, assuaged his poignant distress. True to his resolution he quitted gay company and balls, read his bible and formally practised secret prayer ; but it never yet entered his mind that the divine

law respected any thing, but his external actions.—In reading the sacred volume, this passage struck his mind, Gal. iii. 10. "Curled is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." The question now, is, have you continued in all things written in the law ? The result of self-examination is, I have omitted this, that, and the other duty.—Resolved that I will *continue* in all things.—Here he got some comfort.—As part of this *all things* in the view of his own mind, was to read his bible with more attention than he had done before, in apparently prosecuting this duty, these words of the sacred scriptures came to view, "I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings." Jer. xvii. 10. Never did this young man feel before that God condemned evil thoughts as well as evil external conduct. This gave a new shock to the mind and added new terror. But the deceitful heart tho' wounded would not give over the self-righteous scheme of saving itself by its own exertions. This correspondent passage, to the Lord's searching the heart, came up to view, "keep thine heart with all diligence." Upon viewing this he resolves to keep his heart according to the divine rule. He finds this a more difficult task than he ever before attempted ; yet he did not despair but that diligence and habit would, at last make this duty more easy. He would, often, on the Sabbath-day call his mind to attend to the things of religion ; but worldly thoughts would intrude—he would check himself and renew his resolution, to keep his heart with more attention ; but

he found that he so often failed in this last resolved duty, that he began almost to despair of ever going to heaven upon the present system of his own righteousness. The next passage of scripture, which awakened his attention, was Christ's words to Nicodemus. "Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Now he found that he never would keep his heart as he ought unless he had a new heart—and without a saving change, he felt that he could never escape hell and get to heaven. But the deceitful heart, always trying to get ease from present conviction, seizes this passage and applies it to its own ease. "Ask and it shall be given you"—Upon this passage he reasoned thus, "I cannot change my own heart; but I can ask God to change it for me, and he has given his promise that he will grant my request." Influenced by this false reasoning, the young man resolved that he would pray to God for a new heart and obtained some comfort. But when he was on his bended knees, praying as he thought for a new heart, this passage of scripture came with irresistible force to conscience. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." Conscience made this application "God does require that whatever we do whether we eat or drink or whatsoever we do, we should do it all to the glory of God as our ultimate object, and God condemns every one as a wicked character who does not comply with this requirement. Upon these reflections, these questions came home with irresistible force to the conscience.

Have you done all which you have done to the divine glory, as your ultimate object? Has the divine glory been the last end of your prayer? Here conscience

bore witness that the divine glory was not in the least degree aimed at, in any performance, in any prayer or in any distress; but self-preservation was the whole object. Upon this conclusion, conscience joined with the Deity in pronouncing this sentence. You are justly numbered with the wicked; therefore your prayers are abominable in the sight of God; and God hath established no absolute connexion between your prayers and salvation.—God hath given no promise, but a threatening to such selfish prayers.—Conscience further testified—"You have been hypocritical in your prayers; for you have professedly asked God for a new heart; when you had no direct desire after a new heart; for the nature of a new heart gives up self and aims at the divine glory as its last end; but you are determined not to give up your selfish interest, and you cannot even conceive how you could be happy in having any other chief end but self." These reflections, with the testimony of his conscience, were while the youth was on his bended knees praying as he thought for a new heart, and conscience took hold of God's word and charged him with hypocrisy. Here enmity against God appeared to come to its height.—His heart rose up against God, and in opposition to the dictates of conscience, charged God as being a hard master for requiring him to do a thing, that is to aim ultimately at the divine glory, when conscience testified that there was nothing existing in the soul that had the least tendency to make the divine glory the end of any action. Here he felt that his heart wished that there was no such a God as that with whom he had to deal. This act of direct opposition to God, was,

in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, viewed as abominable and odious, and as justly deserving eternal misery at the hand of an infinitely glorious and good being. Here he felt a pleasing calm—the universe instantaneously appeared to beam forth the creator's glory, in every thing which was beheld. The youth felt that there was nothing wrong in the ways of God, but all the fault was in himself.—In the vindictive justice of Deity, in sending him to endless misery, there appeared a beauty. Reflecting upon the direct opposition of his heart to God which existed but a little before, it appeared to his view as the unpardonable sin; and his present calm appeared as a token of his being given up of God to a state of final reprobation.

The youth argued thus; "I have been under great convictions; but have opposed them all, and now, this calmness of mind—my convictions and distress so suddenly ceasing, is a token that I am given up of God."—Nothing appeared to be left in view, but a sudden and remediless woe.—But sin appeared so great an evil, that he felt that it was more tolerable to perish forever in hell, than to indulge one hard thought of the divine government. He took a view of God's sovereign electing love of a certain particular number of our fallen race, and sometimes, was so swallowed up in the contemplation of so glorious an object, as even to lose a present sense of the importance of contemplating what would become of himself—but then the reflection would return, if you have committed the unpardonable sin, you have no share in the electing love of God, neither will it be for the divine glory to save you from a justly deserved endless misery. The idea of even desir-

ing to be saved, if it was not for the glory of God, appeared to his feelings to be worse than hell. It appeared that God was so glorious in his vindictive justice, that there was no excuse for hating God in the flames of eternal ruin.—He felt that the devils ought to love God supremely, and he felt, if God should send him to hell, that he would condemn the devils for not loving God for his infinite glory.

When the young man apprehended that it might be inconsistent with the glory of God to save him; he sincerely desired of the Lord a disposition to say, righteous art thou, O Lord, tho' vindictive justice should plunge me to endless woe. All these feelings he considered as not implying any moral goodness in himself; but only as a speculative discovery of the supreme worth of the divine being, and the divine perfections. He viewed himself as possessing nothing but vileness, pollution and sin.

Thus this youth, who was about twenty years old, continued for a number of weeks, having no sensible discovery of any thing in Deity standing in relation to himself but vindictive justice and divine sovereignty. The apostle's words, speaking of God, saying, "therefore he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," appeared ineffably delightful. It appeared to him that it was infinitely suitable, that God alone, a being of infinite knowledge, goodness and power, should dispose of all things according to the counsel of his own will, in the natural and moral world. The absolute dependence of the sinner upon God, appeared, exceedingly, to aggravate the criminality of every act of rebellion. The sinner's finding fault with God

for any of the divine conduct appeared to be as inconsistent as the ax rising up against him that handleth it.

Reflecting upon these sublime subjects, the youth often realized with exquisite delight these words of the Apostle Paul, "Oh the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 33.

Notwithstanding all the above views and feelings, he could see no ground to expect that he should finally enjoy the divine favor. The first gleam of hope, of which he was conscious, was in the following train of reflections. He was contemplating the glories of vindictive justice and divine sovereignty, and how justly the whole human race might have been doomed to endless misery, as the fallen angels without remedy or hope—swallowed up in the grandeur and sublimity of this subject, these words of sacred scripture came to his mind, "The old man is crucified with Christ Jesus, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin." In this passage the first thing which struck the mind was the glory of Christ's divinity. There could not have been greater evidence in the view of the mind that Christ was truly the eternal God, if he had seen Christ in the flesh work the most stupendous miracles. The moral evidence of Christ's divinity was so great that his mind had not the least possible doubt.—It appeared that it was impossible for infinite goodness to pardon one sin if Christ had not been truly God as well as truly man. The necessity of an infinite atonement, in order to the pardon of sinners, appeared beyond all doubt

to him who felt sin to be an infinite evil, and who felt that God was infinitely holy in eternally punishing the sinner.

The way of salvation through such a Saviour, appeared to be infinitely glorious, even if he should never have an interest in it; yea, the glory of this salvation appeared to be entirely independent of his own personal safety. He felt, if it were possible to obtain salvation upon any other plan than through the Lord Jesus Christ, it would be undesirable. If he had ten thousand souls, he felt willing to trust them all unconditionally in the hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. He felt it to be a sweet truth that God would have mercy on whom he would have mercy, and that he had an ultimate regard to his own glory in every one he saved.

It appeared that the only rational ground to hope that God would have mercy upon him, was, because the ultimate object of the divine conduct was the illustration of his own glorious perfections. He felt himself inexpressibly vile, and that if God had a regard to him personally, nothing could be seen by infinite wisdom and goodness, but a just reason for his endless misery. This was the testimony of the holy, just and good law of God—this was the feelings of his mind, and this was clearly manifested in the infinite atonement of Christ.—Herein was felt the very glory of Christ's atonement that it clearly manifested God's holy, and righteous displeasure against sin, and the just desert of the sinner. In these reflections it appeared that the whole plan of salvation by the glorious Redeemer was all of infinitely rich, free and sovereign grace. It was grace to provide such an atonement and it

was rich grace to forgive the sins of any on account of the atonement which was made.

All these reflections came up to view in contemplating that memorable passage "the old man is crucified with Jesus, that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin." After the above reflections from a view of Christ's divinity and the glory of his atonement without any personal interest, being realized in it; the youth took a view of his own moral state, and thus reasoned.

"I remember, but a few weeks ago I aimed at nothing more but my own personal happiness as my last end—I hated the divine law—I hated the divine sovereignty with all my heart—I thought I desired a heart to glorify God; but conscience bore testimony that my ultimate object was my own deliverance from hell and to secure my own future personal or selfish happiness; but now I love the divine law though it condemns me; I long to be delivered from all sin; because it is a hateful thing to oppose an infinitely holy and good God—I love the divine sovereignty, if it should leave me to endless deserved woe—I love the grace of the gospel, though I should never be the subject of God's pardoning grace—I desire to be saved in no other way than through the Lord Jesus Christ, if it were possible." The question came to the view, of the mind, is not this to be born again? Is not this the saving change of which the special grace of God is the efficient cause? With a trembling soul, the youth ventured to hope that God had created him anew in Christ Jesus, that the body of sin might be destroyed that he should not henceforth serve sin. He was

ready to say, if this be the change, I know that the whole glory is due to God alone.

In every stage of my conviction I have endeavoured to build up a self-righteous scheme. But as fast as I built, a gracious God destroyed this house which was built upon a sandy foundation, and must have fallen sooner or later. The youth felt that he never did any thing in his unregenerate state, but what had a tendency to lead him from God—that his most solemn prayers were all hypocrisy—that he was opposed to the very nature of a new heart, when his deceitful heart thought he most earnestly desired such a gift of God—that if God did not undertake the whole of his salvation from the beginning to the end, there was no foundation for a hope of final happiness. Sensible that although the whole cause of regeneration, repentance unto life and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and perseverance unto the end of life, be all of God; yet the whole of the effects produced by divine grace, consist in the voluntary exercises of the creature himself. Therefore he felt that none would be saved without the sovereign efficacious grace of God, and that none would be lost but by their own wilful opposition to those glorious objects, which all are under infinite obligations to regard.

After this young man had obtained a hope that he had met with a saving change of heart, and his conscience bore testimony that he renounced his own righteousness as the ground of his acceptance with God and that he founded his hope of salvation from sin and wrath on the atonement of Christ and the efficacious grace of God; he felt it an unspeakable privilege as well as an indispensable duty to

make a public profession of religion, and to follow Christ in the use of his appointed means, and the participation of the ordinances of his house : accordingly, he joined a Presbyterian church in the vicinity where he was born ; and he still continues to profess to be attached to salvation by the glorious Redeemer, and derives all his hopes of final victory over sin from the unchanging promise of that God, who, in unsearchable sovereignty, first began the good work of grace in his heart.

(To be continued.)

TO THE EDITORS OF THE CON-
EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

GENTLEMEN,

THE following is a reality ; if you think it will do good, you are welcome to publish it.

I FIND by the complexion of your Magazine, that Connecticut religion, though professedly Christian, is totally different from that of the generality of Christians in this part of the country. Light and darkness are not more opposite, than you are from each other, in what you each call essential points. Of course, if yours be the only religion which leads the soul to heaven, ours certainly will not save us from hell. If yours be the true religion, ours, it appears to me, is worse than infidelity itself ; inasmuch as the one lulls to perfect security, while the other seldom leaves the mind at rest.

The above remarks I will endeavor to verify by a few incidents taken from real life. As a curiosity to the hearers, I occasionally read pieces from your numbers, in mixed companies ; otherwise the work would not be known, except to a few deluded subscribers, who

are much pitied by their wiser neighbors. The observations are such as follow. After hearing an account of a revival of religion, one, who I think is a church member, asked what was meant by *conviction* and *conversion*, so often repeated. I explained it, after a manner which you call *orthodox*. Upon which he declared, with a loud laugh, that " he had never heard of such a thing before ! " I read the address of the Berkshire clergy, on the subject of catechizing children, in No. 8, to a circle of polite ladies, several of whom are professors ; which I found to be exceedingly disgusting to the whole company. One said it was the most horrid thing she ever heard in her life ; another observed, that the odious and ever to be dreaded word *hell* should never be named to children ; and that the thought of endless punishment was too much for any one to reflect upon. Another, who had a number of small children, said, that her determination was, to bring them up in the constant *love*, not *fear* of God ; that they might always look to him as a friend and parent ; and finally die without dismal forebodings. It was the opinion of all, that children would *naturally* pursue the direct road to heaven, unless *jostled* out of it by external force. The letter addressed to two young ladies, respecting their attendance on a ball, page 317, I sent to a young friend who joined the church on Sunday, and went to a ball on Monday ; who very soon returned the book, with her answer, that she " pitied the fool who wrote it." A clergyman lately preached on the subject of the *new birth* ; and after laboring awhile to prove that it meant nothing out of the common course, summed up the whole in

these words, "All I know about regeneration is, for one to draw up *strong* resolutions to keep the commandments of God." And I am certain it is not uncharitable to suppose there are many others, who preach much against *infidelity*, and pray earnestly for the spread of the gospel, who dread nothing more, than they do the influence of what you call the *divine spirit*. The spread of this contagion would undoubtedly draw forth all their skill and practice in opposition. Thus you see, that what you call a "revival of religion," bears no better name here (and I think I may safely say, among a great majority of ministers and people) than "a delusion of the devil." I have myself heard it expressly so called from the pulpit. No great, however, is said particularly of the Magazine; for the work is but little known among the bulk of the people where the writer of this lives. But from these few hints, he thinks you must form a tolerably correct idea of the sentiments of many, to say the least, who pride themselves in being called *Christians*; and who say to unbelievers, especially to those of other countries, "stand off, we are holier than you." It is needless for me to repeat, for I think you must have understood, that I allow of many exceptions here. There are doubtless many, who, whether right or wrong, agree with you as to religious sentiments. It is my earnest wish, Gentlemen, that some of your able writers would come forward, and show the difference, there is between an *open infidel*, and one who *believes* in Christianity, but not "to the saving of the soul;" and which of them, according to the usual operations of providence, is in the most likely way to obtain the reward promised

to such as "*believe unto salvation*," the former, who is not supposed to feel perfectly secure and easy, or the latter, who is grounded in the principle, that regeneration means no more, than "*strong resolutions to keep the commands of God*." BEREAN.

MESSRS. EDITORS,

THE perusal of Mr. Hall's narrative of a work of God's grace, in West-Simbury, in your last number, was very edifying. His account of a person under serious impressions, who in his sleep saw his dead daughter come to him and warn him not to be damned, excited the following reflections on dreams, which, if you think worthy of a place, you will please to insert in your useful Magazine.

I am, &c.

PEREGRINUS.

THAT the subject may be treated with necessary caution, it is to be observed, that the kind of dreams now under consideration is supposed to be entirely different from that by which, anciently, God revealed his will to the patriarchs and prophets. It is not supposed to have any thing in it of the nature of a divine revelation—or in any degree, to prescribe a rule of life. Nay, in these last days, God has completed the revelation he designed for mankind, by the ministry of his son and the instrumentality of his Apostles; and the sure word of prophecy contains all the articles of our faith, and the perfect and only rule of life.

Dreams are judged to be the operations of the fancy or imagination, when the subject of them is in a slumbering state; in the interval between proper sleep, when the mind is in a state of entire rest.

and wholly inactive, and the wakeful moment, when reason resumes its seat, and controls this faculty of the mind.

Natural dreams are supposed to arise from various causes—an obstructed perspiration—a stomach oppressed with food hard to digest—anxiety of mind, &c. &c.—Though it be difficult to determine the real cause of them, yet it is highly probable, that they arise some from one, others from a part, or the whole of these causes conjointly; yet there are others which, it is supposed are the effects of an external influence, which are impressions made on the imagination by an invisible agency. Those which are of this kind only, are the subjects of present reflection.—Though it be impossible to demonstrate the absolute truth, or falsity, of this opinion, yet divesting ourselves of the credulity of ignorance and superstition, instances have been produced which bear such a semblance of truth, that it would be rather incredulous than rational to dispute the justice of this supposition. Of this kind may we not consider the instance in Mr. Hallock's narrative. A sensible gentleman gave me the following account. In a particular situation he was violently tempted to commit a very criminal act. He consented, and fixed a time for the purpose; the next day. The following night in his sleep a person appeared before him in a mien of peculiar gravity and demanded of him, what, have you consented to perpetrate the horrid deed? And warned him against it with great solemnity. The surprise and confusion produced by this address awakened him from sleep. Considering it as unworthy of notice, being a dream, he again composed himself to rest, resolving to persist

in his purpose; but no sooner had slumber closed his eyes, than the same person, with a countenance more stern, and in a tone more menacing admonished him of his danger and warned him to desist. This again awakened him. Reflecting upon it still as a dream, and growing more obstinate, he determined to execute his design at every hazard; but no sooner had sleep locked up his senses, than lo! the same personage again appeared before him arrayed in that majesty and terror which filled him with horror and dismay, rebuked, menaced and addressed him, with that energy and authority, which compelled him instantly to abandon his design—and saved him from ruin.—I know a person of credibility who says, that for many years past, no new scene hath opened, nor event occurred, which materially affected him, whether prosperous or adverse, which had not been prognosticated to him by some dream that preceded it; and tho' he could not conjecture from the dream what the event would be, except the kind of it, favorable or disagreeable, yet when it existed, the coincidence between the event and the dream excited his admiration.

If it be enquired, what is the end of them? It will be replied, various, according to their tendency and the views of the agent.—Some, accommodated to the corrupt taste of the heart, by those whose object it is to entice and destroy, are designed to invigorate and confirm sinful dispositions, by impressing the imagination with strong and lively ideas of the pleasure of sensual gratifications.—Some may be monitory, to apprise the subject that some important event awaits him, and to excite him to prepare for it.—Others, for

the purpose of real piety and Christian comfort, to admonish the subjects of danger, restrain from sin, and administer instruction, encouragement and consolation to the children of God in this dreary world. Suspending other remarks, let us now consider, to what religious purposes this hypothesis may be applied.—Admitting the reality of dreams from an external cause, or invisible agent, we may infer,

1. The infallible certainty of another world, and the existence of immaterial spirits. That such effects are produced, such impressions made, is now supposed, but this most certainly implies a cause which produced, an agent who made them; and the evidence of such an existence which this exhibits, is direct and absolutely conclusive. It is impossible to evade it.—Some who choose to be sceptical, to deny, and doubt, of every thing, will affirm the supposition, that impressions are made on the mind by an external, invisible cause, to be wholly chimerical, though the gravity and credibility of the persons who relate them, the numerous instances in which they appear, the endless variety of form they assume, and the consent of the event to the impression, would irresistibly obtrude a conviction of their reality upon their minds, if they had not abandoned themselves to an obstinate and incurable incredulity.—But to those who admit the reality of such dreams, this evidence of another world and invisible agents, is demonstrative and incontestible. The existence of another world and immaterial spirits can no more be controverted by them, than the existence of other countries and other nations with which they have intercourse. To the subject of them especially, this evidence is direct and intuitive. He

has experienced the impression, realized the effect, and the event, surprising him at an unexpected hour, has compelled him to cry out, *this is my dream!* He can no more dispute the dream, than he can dispute his own recollection. He feels that the dream portended the event. He is equally conscious that the impression could arise from no natural cause within, and could be produced by no human cause without. It must have been produced by an invisible agent. He is as certain therefore, of the existence and agency of invisible spirits, from the effect which he feels, as he is of the existence and influence of the sun, by the light and heat of its rays; and he is as certain of these, as he is of his own perceptions and senses: and if there be such beings, they must have a place of residence, and there must be an invisible, eternal world.—According to the quality of the dream, its tendency and effect, good or evil, must be its author, as the fountain cannot send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter: and if dreams are of diverse qualities, the authors of them must consist of opposite characters. By the medium of dreams or impressions, therefore, the subject of them has a kind of direct and intuitive evidence of the certain existence of invisible agents, or spirits, of opposite principles and pursuing opposite ends, inhabiting an invisible world—he penetrates the dark recess—discovers good and evil angels—heaven and hell, as the respective places of their abode—and his views ultimately terminate in the incontrovertibly certain existence of one only living and true God, who is over all blessed forever more.

2. These impressions demonstrate, that there is a constant in-

tercourse between the inhabitants of the invisible world, and those of this inferior globe. Although we know not the manner of communication, and are insensible of their presence, yet we have full evidence, that they make frequent visits, and if they communicate with us in our slumbering and irrational moments, do they not in our wakeful and sensible hours, interesting themselves in all our concerns, and as the attendants and spectators of our ways, are affected by all our moral conduct according to its nature, the good being filled with regret, and holy resentment, by all those instances of it, which are unworthy of the dignity and relation of man; and the evil exulting in the effect of their stratagem, the dark caverns of hell resounding with shouts, in praise of those arts of seduction which they so successfully practised upon us; or are filled with chagrin and rage at a virtuous and effectual opposition to their plots; while the good pleased with the rational and pious effort, with joyful alacrity wing their way, and by communicating the grateful intelligence, diffuse joy and gladness thro' all the realms of purity and bliss.—In what an inconceivably important view does this set the ways of men, as having a mighty effect on the inhabitants of heaven and hell! And in how conspicuous a place does it fix the individuals of the human race! In the open view, and engaging the attention of their invisible spectators who inspect and scrutinize their conduct, and wait, in anxious suspense, the decisions they form respecting the parts they will act, and affected by their conduct according to its kind;—how august and impressive the idea!—What an invincible restraint should it lay on all unwor-

thy pursuits and acts!—and what a powerful stimulus to each, to fill up his place with dignity, propriety and duty! We are taught,

3. The medium by which invisible spirits operate and produce effects in men; the imagination. It is the peculiar prerogative of the blessed God, the searcher of hearts to operate on the soul by an immediate and irresistible agency. To the rational mind neither angels, nor devils, have immediate access nor can they excite volition nor move the affections, but by the medium of the imagination, that faculty in which ideas are formed, by the exhibition or impression of external sensible objects.—As the ministers of God's pleasure, according to his direction, they premonish persons of interesting scenes which are before them, by impressing the imagination, in the slumbering hour, either with the events themselves, or those external sensible objects, which typify and represent them.—By this avenue they have access to the mind, and influence or excite acts of will, by impressing the imagination with glowing ideas of those subjects which gratify and please the taste, which stimulates the will to prefer and pursue them, as desirable objects.—By this medium evil spirits practise the arts of seduction, impressing the imagination, both in the slumbering and wakeful moment, with lively ideas of those objects which are accommodated to the corrupt depraved taste, and so entice, ensnare and destroy.—How exceedingly necessary to watch and pray, knowing the devices of Satan, lest he get advantage against us?—And do not holy angels restrain the pious from acts of vice, by suggesting affecting views of the evil and danger of them? And excite to pious acts by

exhibiting the happy fruits of them, in the most inviting and persuasive form?—The subject hath been protracted to an unexpected, and very probably to a tedious length; but if it gives any rational conceptions of the agency of invisible spirits—if it produces an habitual and realizing sense, that we are at all times in their view, and especially in the view of an all seeing and heart-searching God and judge—if it induces us to exercise a discreet and holy circumspection over all our conduct, and to perform the duties of our characters and relations with assiduity and fidelity, and so to prepare for the society of an innumerable company of angels, and to unite in the employment, delight and praise, of the general assembly and church of the first born—the fruits of it will be glorious and happy.—

FOR THE CONNECTICUT EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.

MESS'RS EDITORS,

A READER of your Magazine requests an answer to the following questions, viz.

1. Did God from all eternity, decree that a certain part of mankind, viz. the Elect should go to heaven do what they will?

2. Did God from all eternity decree that the other part of mankind, viz. the Reprobates should go to Hell do what they can?

3. Can God be just in so doing?

P.

Religious Intelligence.

The following Extract from the Missionary Journal of the Rev. Seth Williston will show the rapidity with which settlements have been formed and churches gather-

ed in a part of the county of Ontario, state of New-York. The date is Pittstown, October 7th 1800.

“In the beginning of 1799, there was a small church here (Pittstown) consisting of only 9 or 10 members; this Church was formed in 1796, when Mr. *Rolph* became their minister. This was the only Congregational or Presbyterian church in the county, which had a pastor in the beginning of 1799.* At this same date, there was a church in Bloomfield No. 10, consisting of about 30 members; some of these belonged to the neighboring societies. There was a small disorganised Presbyterian church at Charleston—I believe there were not more than 7 or 8 members. There was, at the same time, a church upon the same plan, consisting of a few more members, but in a neglected and unsocial state, in Palmyra. These were, I believe all the pedo-baptist churches in Ontario county, in January 1799.

“There are now the following churches upon the congregational plan, viz. One at Canadagwa, consisting of about 20 members. One at Bloomfield No. 11, consisting of about 20 members. The church at Bloomfield No. 10, 4th range, is now composed of nearly 70 members. In the same town, No. 10, 5th range, there is a church formed of about 24 members. At Bristol, No. 9, a church was formed in May 1799, which now consists of 67 members. The church in No. 8, has increased to 22. A church was formed in Middletown in January of the present year; it contains twelve members. The church at Charleston has been

* Mr. *Rolph* has been lately dismissed.

revived out of its ruins and re-organized, upon the congregational platform, and now contains more than 20 members. The church at Palmyra has had considerable additions, but I cannot tell how many.

"The local situation of these churches is such that they all adjoin each other, except Palmyra, which is severed from the rest by a single town. These churches have, during the present year, formed themselves into an Association for mutual assistance. The church at Bristol, No. 9, is furnished with a pastor, the Rev. Mr. Grover. The church at Bloomfield, No. 11, have the Rev. Reuben Parmele for their pastor. The church at Palmyra have the Rev. Mr. Fairbanks for their minister; and the Rev. Mr. Field is ordained pastor of the church in Canandaigua. These four ministers have all been settled since the revival of religion began in the county, the winter before last. The Rev. Zadoc Hunn who resides in the county, occasionally preaches in the destitute settlements. The revival of religion which took place in Ontario, the last year seems to have produced most of these happy fruits."

In other parts of his journal Mr. Williston mentions the formation of many churches in other counties, and it appears that the religious state of the country is on the whole flourishing. It will be a long time before the new settlements at the westward can be supplied with regular, settled pastors, and all who have at heart the interest of the Redeemer's kingdom will feel the importance of contributing generously to the support of Missionaries, that those new and scattered settlements may not be wholly deprived of the

preaching of the gospel and the administration of Christian ordinances.

Extract of a letter from the Rev. David Huntington, Missionary to the northern counties of New-York and Vermont, dated Hardwick, Feb. 5, 1801.

"Ever since I began my mission, I have experienced much of the goodness of God, in the special divine supports he hath given me, and in the success he hath afforded to my attempts to promote his glorious cause. In many places the hearts of the people have been inclined to receive me with cordiality, and to hear the word of God with great seriousness. In various parts of the state of New-York and also of Vermont, the spirit of the Lord has been evidently poured out, and the appearances of reformation have been and still are encouraging. Once in particular, when I had much exhausted my strength in preaching, the young people were so deeply impressed with a sense of eternal things, that they desired me to preach again in the evening, which I accordingly did; and I trust the season was not lost. This was in a place near the Province line, never before visited by Missionaries. The people have agreed to keep up public worship on the sabbath and are many of them engaged in religion.

"In many other places there are evident beginnings of a good work; *the harvest* in these northern settlements is truly *plenteous*, but alas! *the labourers are few*. Faithful guides to souls, who are skilful in the word of righteousness, are greatly needed. Many enquire whether more Missionaries may be soon expected, and are anxious to have preachers among

them who may teach them the right way, and confront false teachers. The greater part of the people are well indoctrinated, and are most fond of sound, evangelical preachers. Never since the first adventurers came into these parts, as it appears to me, has there been so urgent a call for preachers of this cast. And it is my ardent wish that more Missionaries be sent this way in future, than the Society has formerly sent, even if fewer should on the same account, be sent in other directions."

MISSIONARIES.

The Rev. *David Huntington* returned lately from a missionary tour to the northern part of the states of New-York and Vermont.

POETRY.

COMMUNICATED AS ORIGINAL.

The Christian Soldier exulting in the near prospect of death and judgment.

I'M now prepared, thro' grace divine,
My life to yield, my breath resign;
To bid these earthly scenes adieu,
And hail the scenes, which rise to view.

All hail grim death! relentless king!
I now defy thy potent sting!
And thou insatiate, dreary grave!
Since great Emanuel, strong to save,

Has past thy gates, in humble clay,
And rent the massy bars away;
No more thy mighty victory boast,—
Thy trophies spoil'd, thy victory lost.

I've fought, array'd in arms divine,
And heaven proclaims the conquest mine;—

The arduous race, with patience run,
And now the prize of glory won.

My soul, on wings of faith, descries
Her crown immortal, in the skies,
Where saints redeem'd, with angels join,
In lofty notes of praise divine.

Thence I behold the judge descend,—
Angels his chariot wheels attend;—
Before his face, in dire dismay,
The heavens and earth shall flee away.

Those humble souls, of heavenly birth,
Who wait his last descent to earth,
He'll raise to his divine abode,
And be their Everlasting God.

TROPHIMUS.

The Glory and sufferings of our Saviour.

A DIEU to earth and all terrestrial joys,
A nobler theme my wondering thought employs,
I'll quit the earth to visit yonder skies,
There reigns my God! thither my soul arise.

Lo! near the father's side the eternal son
With equal glory fills the eternal throne
In him I view a Saviour and a God,
The father's equal join'd with flesh and blood.

Amazing sight! didst thou once bleed
and die?

Nail'd to the accursed tree on Calvary
Were thy fair temples with sharp thorns defil'd,

Thy spotless face with blood and spitting soil'd?

Yes! here (by wretches doom'd to quenchless flames,

The same thou cam'st to save from dark domains

Of everlasting woe) thou wast condemn'd,

Yea, mock'd and buffeted, scourg'd and contem'd.

O matchless grace! that staid the vengeful flames,

And bound the thunders in thy mighty chains,

Which check'd the flaming seraphs of the sky

When thus they saw their God and maker die!

Worthy art thou! forever live and reign,

Who thus by death hast leas'd the prisoners chains;

Thy name, O King of Kings, shall ever sound,

Great Lord of Lords the echoing heavens resound.